









MARTINA ARROYO

DAVID DICHIERA

PHILIP GLASS

EVE QUELER

National Endowment for the Arts

2010



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Welcome from the NEA Chairman

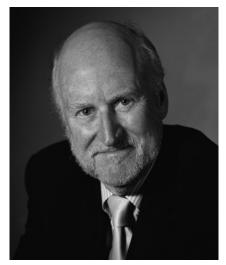


Photo by Michael Eastman

t is fitting that as the largest funder of the arts and of artists in this country, the National Endowment for the Arts pays tribute to individuals who have devoted their life's work to their artistic craft. These American artists have dedicated their careers to creating, performing, conducting, and providing leadership within one of the most demanding art forms—opera.

I've spent much of my life's work in the theater, and as such I understand the many demands of the opera house. Even the smallest opera production requires an orchestra, principal singers, a chorus, and dancers, as well as the creative forces of the theater: set, costume, lighting designers, and stage directors to bring all the disparate parts together into one carefully crafted production. Opera is the marriage of voice, instruments, dance, theater, and design. It is one of the most complicated art forms created—and these four honorees exemplify the creativity and excellence of opera in the United States.

The NEA's investment in opera began 45 years ago with our earliest grant awards, and the NEA Opera Honors now in their third year—continue our commitment to this art form. Art is a part of the American cultural landscape. Artists play a key role in the economy of the towns and cities in which we live and help us to define who we are as a society. The NEA is proud to support the creative spirit from incubation to polished performance.



Rocco Landesman Chairman National Endowment for the Arts

Greetings from Plácido Domingo, Washington National Opera



Photo by Debi Fox

he Washington National Opera is proud and delighted to collaborate with the National Endowment for the Arts in presenting the 2010 NEA Opera Honors awards ceremony and concert.

This year, the NEA Opera Honors recognize four individuals for their extraordinary contributions to opera in America. Soprano Martina Arroyo is a beloved figure in the opera world not only for her outstanding work as a performer but also for the work of her foundation, which seeks to develop young generations of operatic talent. David DiChiera's groundbreaking work as a general director and leader of various opera companies has sown the seeds of opera in America as we know it today. Through his operatic works, composer Philip Glass has helped to demonstrate that opera is a living organism with a repertoire that continues to reinvent itself with the times. Conductor Eve Queler has made significant contributions to the evolution and popularity of opera by choosing rarely performed works, and by discovering and fostering the growth of gifted young artists.

The NEA Opera Honors symbolize the important position that opera occupies in the American arts world and represent one of the few times each year that outstanding Americans are nationally recognized for their lifetime achievements in this treasured field. Despite the difficulty that the arts world faces during the current economic

crisis, the popularity of opera continues to grow at a time when many cultural organizations have been greatly affected by economically challenging times.

Celebrating the outstanding individuals in any field is important, however I am especially pleased to know that at long last the people who have committed themselves to opera—be they singers, conductors, composers, or administrators—are receiving this wonderful recognition from the United States government. It seems fitting, then, that these individuals are being saluted here in the nation's capital.

Like the NEA, WNO is deeply committed to bringing opera to an ever-expanding audience, not only by presenting stimulating productions performed by outstanding artists but also by providing first-rate training and education programs, such as the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist program which exhibits WNO's commitment to fostering a new generation of extraordinary performers. This shared commitment to the public and our communities is just one more reason we are so pleased to be collaborating with the NEA on the 2010 NEA Opera Honors.

I take great pleasure in welcoming all of you as we salute the recipients of the 2010 NEA Opera Honors, and extend my personal thanks to everyone who has made it possible.

Plácido Domingo General Director, Washington National Opera

Greetings from Marc Scorca, **OPERA** America



Photo by Dario Acosta

he NEA Opera Honors document opera's essential place in the American cultural landscape and recognize the tremendous contributions of artists who have advanced the opera art form in our country.

The arrival of opera in most communities in the United States is relatively recent. David DiChiera's formation of Michigan Opera Theatre in 1971 is emblematic of the rapid growth that continues today as new opera companies continue to emerge nationwide. Many companies are redefining the boundaries of the art from with performances of a varied repertoire in non-traditional venues. Some perform operas in a semi-staged or concert format, modeled after the success of Eve Queler's Opera Orchestra of New York.

Only a generation ago, aspiring American opera singers had to travel to Europe to gain experience before being considered for leading roles at home. Thanks to the emergence of outstanding university opera departments, conservatories, and young artist training programs—exemplified by the Martina Arroyo Foundation—American artists are among the most well-trained and versatile in the world.

Productions of operas by American composers were almost unheard of in the decades following World War II, putting opera at risk of becoming a "museum art form."

Responding to this risk, companies began to commission and produce new American works. The operas of Philip Glass are historic for their quality, creativity, and catalytic impact on the field for more than two decades. Today, U.S. opera companies premiere as many as 20 operas every season and offer productions of existing works from an expanding American opera repertoire.

Last year with support from the NEA, OPERA America launched National Opera Week. More than 100 organizations in nearly 35 states offered free activities that highlighted the excitement and accessibility of opera in the United States, bringing public attention to the art form and additional acknowledgement of the outstanding achievements of the NEA Opera Honors recipients.

As we honor four individuals who have shaped the American opera tradition, OPERA America and our members prepare for another celebration of the inventiveness and excitement of opera. National Opera Week 2010 (October 29–November 7) will build on the success of our inaugural year to further establish opera as a vital part of our nation's cultural community.

Marc A. Scorca President and CEO, OPERA America

NEA Opera Honors Overview

he NEA Opera Honors was established by Congressional appropriation in 2008. This award, recognizing individuals for their lifelong contributions to the arts, is the first to be instituted by the National Endowment for the Arts in more than 25 years. This program joins two wellestablished lifetime honors programs at the Arts Endowment: the NEA Jazz Masters and NEA National Heritage Fellowships. Recipients of the NEA Opera Honors are selected on the basis of nominations from the public.

The inaugural NEA Opera Honorees comprised composer Carlisle Floyd, general director Richard Gaddes, conductor James Levine, and soprano Leontyne Price. Produced in partnership with OPERA America and the Washington National Opera, the 2008 NEA Opera Honors awards ceremony encompassed musical performances, video documentaries, and personal tributes from fellow artists. As part of her acceptance speech, Leontyne Price rendered an unanticipated a cappella performance of "America, the Beautiful" that was cited by Washington Post music critic Anne Midgette as the number one musical event of 2008.

The 2009 NEA Opera Honors were conferred upon composer John Adams, stage director and librettist Frank Corsaro, mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne, stage director and general director Lotfi Mansouri, and conductor Julius Rudel. Highlights of the 2009 awards event included a poignant tribute by composer André Previn and a rousing and delightful acceptance speech by Frank Corsaro. The day began with an informal conversation with the honorees that was moderated by Anne Midgette.

2010 marks the third annual NEA Opera Honors, and with it, our acknowledgment and celebration of a new group of master artists. The centerpiece of the NEA Opera Honors is an awards ceremony and concert on October 22, 2010, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing



2009 NEA Opera Honors recipients Lotfi Mansouri, Julius Rudel, Marilyn Horne, Frank Corsaro, and John Adams. Photo by Henry Grossman

Arts in Washington, DC. In addition to the public benefit of this free event, the proceedings will again be captured for audiences nationwide through radio broadcasts and a range of new media outlets. This year's awards acknowledge the careers of a singer, general director, composer, and music director.

Martina Arroyo is admired around the world for her operatic roles, oratorio and recital performances, recordings, and also for her commitment to young artist development through the Martina Arroyo Foundation.

David DiChiera's varied career includes leadership posts in Ohio, California, and Michigan, where as founder of the Michigan Opera Theatre, he has played an important role in the cultural and economic vitality of Detroit.

Philip Glass has had an unprecedented impact upon the musical and intellectual life of our time through his composition of more than 20 operas, as well as numerous symphonies, compositions for his own ensemble, and his wide-ranging collaborations.

Eve Queler's career has been dedicated to championing rarely performed operas and to discovering and presenting emerging singers through her work as music director of the Opera Orchestra of New York.

Each of these artists has had a profound influence on generations of singers, composers, directors, and audiences. Their talents have contributed in untold ways to the landscape of opera in the United States, a composite of American stories shared through this art form. We acknowledge the 2010 recipients of the NEA Opera Honors for their individual and collective contributions that continue to nurture our American culture. The presentation of these awards launches a celebration of opera in America that culminates with National Opera Week, taking place this year from October 29–November 7.

The American Opera Singer: Five Pathbreakers

by Peter G. Davis

o country has a monopoly on outstanding opera singers in our global society. Today, great voices can come from anywhere—and they do. Connoisseurs may regret the disappearance of the distinctive national singing styles that once defined the vocal scene more than a century ago, but the sophisticated cosmopolitan approach that now prevails has its compensations. Professional standards of operatic performance have never been higher, and American singers, with their thorough training, technical facility, athletic good looks, stylistic flexibility, keen sense of theater, and can-do enthusiasm, play a prominent part in making the international mix so successful.

This was not always the case, and the emergence of the American singer as a major force in opera is a comparatively recent phenomenon. European settlers may have begun to populate the North American continent in quantity around four hundred years ago, just when opera was actually being invented in Italy, but staging musical dramas in Italian or any other language was about the last thing these pioneers had on their minds. Even as urban centers gradually arose and cultural institutions developed, opera remained essentially a source for bowdlerized musical theatricals or catchy tunes rearranged as popular songs in the vernacular. In fact, America did not experience a fully staged opera in its original language and performed by professionally trained singers until November 29, 1825. On that evening, in New York City's Park Theatre, a touring troupe from Europe headed by the famous Spanish singer Manuel García offered Rossini's Il Barbiere di Siviglia, an



Lillian Nordica as Kundry in Richard Wagner's Parsifal. Photo courtesy of Metropolitan Opera Archives

opera in which García himself had created the leading tenor role of Count Almaviva nine years earlier.

That performance may not have changed the American operatic scene over night, but it did set the tone. Opera, most people decided, was a glittering imported bauble unavailable to common folk, and certainly not a proper occupation for young Americans struggling to develop a growing country. That attitude was reinforced by whirlwind visits by potent vocal personalities from Europe, beginning with García's teenage daughter, Maria, who sang Rosina in *Il Barbiere* and would later conquer Europe as the fabled Maria Malibran. A generation later, heavily promoted by P.T. Barnum, Jenny Lind took the country by storm. They and other charismatic singers from abroad may have heightened America's appreciation for classically trained operatic voices and helped popularize operatic music, but they invariably left the impression that American singers were second-best.

Rosa Ponselle Lillian Nordica | Geraldine Farrar | Lawrence Tibbett | Marian Anderson

On the other hand, such singers as Malibran, Lind, and later Adelina Patti also served as potent role models, particularly for a young girl. If she were from upscale surroundings, she would probably have been encouraged to sing around the family parlor piano, and even perhaps be given rudimentary voice training. No wonder those who showed musical talent began to dream that the glamour, celebrity, and riches of these famous singers from Europe might possibly be theirs as well.

Only the most ambitious and fiercely motivated young ladies made the nervy decision to pursue a career as a singer. After all, the problems they faced were formidable: finding proper vocal instruction, dealing with the limitations and instability of early performance organizations, and putting up with the hardships of overland travel, not to mention the prevailing puritanical nineteenth-century attitude that singing on the stage was only fit for fallen women. Despite these obstacles, a surprising number took the plunge and fought the hard fight. Only a few managed to make a name, and even fewer came close to winning the fame and wealth of a Lind or a Patti, but such hardy pioneers as Clara Louise Kellogg (1842–1916), Emma Abbott (1850–1891), and Minnie Hauk (1851–1929) all won a degree of success and proved that it could be done.

Soon conditions were favorable for an important American voice to develop its full potential and find international recognition. Born in 1857 as a farmer's daughter in Maine, Lillian Norton was an unlikely candidate, but by the 1890s, as Lillian Nordica, she had everything a diva could wish for: world-wide engagements, a private railroad car, closets of magnificent gowns, and the adoration of the musical elite of Europe and America. And no American singer before or after Nordica applied more determination, hard work, and sheer Yankee grit to achieve her goals, eventually disciplining what was considered to be one of the era's most glorious voices into a versatile instrument that ranged with equal brilliance through Mozart's Queen of the Night to Wagner's Isolde. Two days before her 57th birthday, as she lay dying in Jakarta from a fever caught during a grueling South Seas tour, Nordica pronounced her own epitaph: "She did her damnedest!"

Of course it is difficult to imagine how Nordica must have sounded to her contemporaries—even the handful of recordings she left can only suggest her vocal impact. The primitive acoustical process was generally unflattering for large, voluptuous voices like Nordica's, but when heard live and unfurled into a large space the effect must have been overwhelming. After her first Isolde at the Metropolitan Opera in 1895, one critic said her voice "rang out with thrilling clearness, power and accuracy." Another wrote: "Let no one speak of Mme. Nordica as merely a beautiful singer hereafter. Her Isolde stamps her as one of the greatest lyric artists of the day." Nordica's exceptional voice, world-wide travels, glamorous triumphs, diverse



Geraldine Farrar in the Metropolitan Opera's performance of Königskinder (The King's Children). Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera Archives

repertory, and ability to compete comfortably with her European peers made her an American anomaly at the time. Many more were to follow in her footsteps.

Nordica was primarily a vocal phenomenon and, one suspects, not an especially compelling stage presence. Times were changing however, and with the rise of Puccini and his contemporaries, singing actresses were needed to tap the full potential of such sensational new heroines as Tosca and Madama Butterfly. America met the challenge in the person of Geraldine Farrar (1882–1967), one of the most glamorous and talked about opera singers of her generation. Farrar was a bewitching dark beauty who made news whatever she did. And everyone wanted to know the steamy details, from her Berlin liaison with Kaiser Wilhelm's son, to her much-discussed affair at the Met with Toscanini, to her tempestuous marriage to Hollywood actor Lou Tellegen while spending her summers out west making silent movies for Cecil B. DeMille.

Despite all the tabloid publicity, Farrar had more than enough voice and old-school vocal training in Europe to be remembered today primarily for her operatic roles, Butterfly in particular. Never interested in being simply a canary bird à la Patti, Farrar realized that the modern repertory demanded, as she once wrote, "passionate acting, for energetic synchronization of music and physical action." And this she supplied, ruling the Metropolitan stage from the year of her debut as Gounod's Juliette in 1906 to her theatrical farewell as Leoncavallo's Zazà in 1922, after which her fans dragged her limousine up Broadway into Times Square. Farrar may have been American opera's first dazzling media personality, but she also had the voice to go with it, as may still be heard in recordings that display the clean, fearless attack and sheer vitality of her singing. Her singular combination of looks, brains, vocal honesty, and provocative stage presence were traits that were quickly becoming distinctive features of the American opera singer.

Learning and absorbing different vocal styles in order to express them naturally and spontaneously has been a constant challenge for American singers, who, unlike their colleagues from Europe, were not born into a living operatic tradition. For Rosa Ponselle (1897–1981), the daughter of Neapolitan immigrants, those instincts must have been inborn—when she first sang for Enrico Caruso, also from Naples, the great tenor remarked that she not only looked like him but sang like him. Ponselle was liter-



Rosa Ponselle in the title role in Vincenzo Bellini's Norma. Photo courtesy of Metropolitan Opera Archives

ally a force of nature whose voice was accurately described by James Huneker in the New York Times after her surprise Metropolitan debut at age 21 in 1918 as Leonora in La Forza del Destino: "Vocal gold," Huneker wrote, with "its luscious lower and middle tones, dark rich and ductile" yet "brilliant and flexible in the upper register." Soon Ponselle was being called a Caruso in petticoats.

Ponselle retained that characteristic vocal quality virtually until the day she died, although her stage career was all too short, ending in 1937. Had she been born into a later generation, Ponselle would surely have entrusted her "vocal gold" to rigorous early training and stage experience rather than growing up on the wing as she did, getting her first taste of public performance in vaudeville. One has the feeling that she never did quite understand how she made those glorious sounds, which led to increasing bouts of insecurity and stage fright. Eventually Ponselle retired to her Villa Pace estate outside Baltimore,



Lawrence Tibbett as Tonio in Ruggero Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*. Photo courtesy of Metropolitan Opera Archives

singing for friends and making private recordings that show no loss of voluptuous tone or the intuitive energy she brought to her chosen repertory. Surely the country had never produced a greater natural voice. Some called her singing provincial and deficient in classical technique, but others heard it as an exciting re-imagination of classic Italian opera—Maria Callas, for one, who once called Ponselle "the greatest singer of us all." It would probably have lasted longer in a more stably organized operatic world in which instinctive talents are allowed time to mature and acquire more self-confidence.

So far the history of the American singer has been essentially a feminist story. There were youths who occasionally felt the call, but society on a whole regarded the profession as an unfit pursuit for a man—even a pointless one, considering the many profitable male careers available in a young country with so many resources to exploit. Lawrence Tibbett (1896–1960) had several worthy predecessors, but he was the country's first true superstar male singer. And he became one in the way Americans

liked it: overnight, when, as a virtual unknown, he brought down the house at the Metropolitan Opera on January 2, 1925, after singing Ford's monologue in Verdi's Falstaff. All of Tibbett's special qualities were unleashed that night: the powerful rock solid tone, easy upper extension, vivid verbal projection, and theatrical presence of a man born for the stage.

The son of a California sheriff, Tibbett virtually invented himself, and his image as a typical all-round American boy from way out West was one that helped him find his audience and fuel his rise to fame and fortune. His success was further facilitated by the advent of talking pictures, and the whole country flocked to see the dashing young man with the gorgeous baritone voice in musicals such as *The Rogue Song.* Records, radio work, recitals, films—Tibbett was active in every medium, but the Met remained the center of his musical life as he added one role after another. Verdi was his specialty, and Tibbett can truly be said to have established a school of American Verdi baritones, a noble tradition carried on by Leonard Warren, Robert Merrill, Cornell MacNeil, and Sherrill Milnes.

The rise of the black American singer tells a different story, running parallel to that of their white colleagues but one with its own special challenges and texture. When Marian Anderson (1897–1993) first dreamed of a career singing in concert and opera, the idea must have seemed futile. There had been black singers before her, but poverty, prejudice, poor education, and social rejection remained formidable obstacles that constantly impeded their progress. Anderson conquered all that with the help of excellent teachers, early recognition in Scandinavia, the support of such influential figures as Arturo Toscanini and Sol Hurok, and of course the rich, wide-ranging eloquence of a voice that seemed to emanate from the very center of her being. Even at that, Anderson was not completely accepted in America until she reached the age of 38, after a triumphant concert in New York's Town Hall on December 30, 1935.

What made Anderson truly an icon and a living symbol of racial equality was the recital she sang on Easter Sunday, April 9, 1939, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC. The concert was hastily arranged, as it was initially intended to occur at Constitution Hall. The Daughters of the American Revolution, however, refused to make the venue available to her. This



Marian Anderson at the 1939 Lincoln Memorial recital. Photo courtesy of Scurlock Studio Records, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

prompted First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt to secure a new venue on the National Mall, where Anderson performed before an audience of 75,000 people. On that occasion and in the many recitals to come, audiences found her serene simplicity and the quiet, almost elemental dramatic force of her presence utterly hypnotic. Although vocally reduced by the time she made her Metropolitan Opera debut as Ulrica in Verdi's Un Ballo in Maschera in 1955, Anderson made history again as the first black singer to appear in a leading role at the Met.

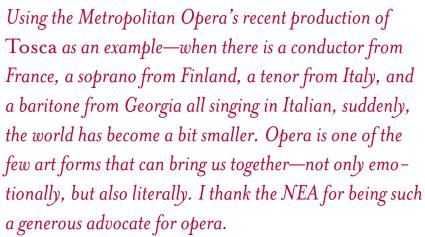
Becoming an opera singer in America may no longer be quite the risky adventure it was when Nordica, Farrar, Ponselle, Tibbett, and Anderson followed their stars. Those great singers and questing personalities prepared the way for the dozens of Americans who flourish today and add their own distinctive voices to an exciting and thriving global art form.

Peter G. Davis is the author of The American Opera Singer (Doubleday) and is currently a contributor to the New York Times and Opera News.

2010

NEA Opera Honors Recipients





™ Martina Arroyo

orn on February 2, 1937, and raised in Harlem by her Puerto Rican father and African-American mother, Martina Arroyo's arts development began at a young age with ballet classes, piano lessons, and singing in the church choir. While supporting her interest in a career in the arts, her parents encouraged her to pursue a more financially stable career as well. At the age of 19, she earned her BA from Hunter College, where she studied to become a high school language teacher and participated in the college's Opera Workshop, studying voice with Joseph Turnau. She subsequently enrolled in graduate work at NYU, began teaching Italian at a New York City public school in the Bronx, and began work at the city's welfare department as a case worker. Simultaneously, she continued her vocal studies with Marinka Gurewich and auditioned at the Met but without success.

In 1958, Arroyo again attempted—and won—the Metropolitan Opera Auditions of the Air radio competition, in which young singers compete for admission to the Met's training program. She pursued singing full-time, focusing her energy at the Met's Kathryn Long School on courses ranging from drama and diction to acting and fencing. That same year she made her Carnegie Hall debut in the American première of Ildebrando Pizzetti's Assassinio nella cattedrale. After performing minor roles

at the Met, Arroyo went to Europe and performed major roles in Vienna, Düsseldorf, Berlin, Frankfurt, and Zürich, where her dramatic performances earned her increasing recognition and popularity.

At the Met in 1965, she substituted for an ailing Birgit Nilsson in the role of Aïda. Although Nilsson was one of the most famous voices at the time, the ever-critical Met audience cheered Arroyo's performance in the role with a standing ovation. She went on to perform at the Met all of the major Verdi roles that would become the basis of her repertory, as well as Donna Anna, Cio-Cio-San, Liù, Santuzza, Gioconda, and Elsa. In 1968, she debuted in London as Valentine in a concert version of Giacomo Meyerbeer's Les Huguenots and also made her Covent Garden debut in Aïda in the title role. Three more significant opera house debuts occurred in 1972, that of Milan's La Scala, Paris' Opéra National, and Buenos Aires' Teatro Colón. The breadth of Arroyo's work is reflected in countless recordings of major operas and orchestral works.

Appointed by President Gerald Ford in 1976, Arroyo served six years on the NEA's National Council on the Arts and currently serves on the boards at Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Opera Guild, Collegiate Chorale, and is a trustee emerita of the Hunter College Foundation. She has given countless master classes nationally and

Opposite: Martin Arroyo as Cio-Cio San in the Metropolitan Opera production of Madama Butterfly. Photo by Louis Mélançon, Metropolitan Opera



Martina Arroyo as Woglinde in *Das Rheingold*. Photo by Louis Mélançon, Metropolitan Opera

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

Martina Arroyo is a featured singer on all selections.

Barber: Andromache's Farewell (Sony Classical Masterworks) with Schippers

Beethoven: Missa Solemnis (Sony Classical Essential Classics) with Forrester, Lewis, Siepi, and Ormandy

Mozart: Don Giovanni (Deutsche Grammophon) with Nilsson, Grist, Schreier, Fischer-Dieskau, Flagello, and Böhm

Verdi: Aida (Opera d'Oro) with Cossotto, Domingo, Cappuccilli, Ghiaurov, and Abbado

Verdi: La Forza del Destino (EMI Classics) with Casoni, Bergonzi, Cappuccilli, Raimondi, Evans, and Gardelli

Verdi: *Un Ballo in Maschera* (EMI Classics) with Grist, Cossotto, Domingo, Cappuccilli, and Muti

internationally, and judged several competitions including the George London Competition and the Tchaikovsky International Competition. She has been recognized for her myriad accomplishments by numerous organizations. She was inducted as a Fellow into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2002); awarded the V.E.R.A. honor by The Voice Foundation (2006), and she was honored by Amici di Verdi in London, Citizens Committee for New York City, and Opera Index among others.

While she continues to present master classes and lectures at many institutions throughout the world, she is most passionate about having established the Martina Arroyo Foundation in New York City in 2003, which offers emerging artists at the inception of their professional careers a structured curriculum, focusing on the study and preparation of complete operatic roles.

Known as a consummate performer, Arroyo is also highly regarded and beloved for her engaging personality and quick wit. Her countless interviews and appearances on television—most notably appearing more than 20 times on *The Tonight Show*—helped to break down opera's reputation as a formal and inaccessible art form. Unassuming, delightful, and seemingly unguarded, Arroyo's warmth and talent translate from radio to stage to screen.



Maritina Arroyo with Plácido Domingo in *La Forza del Destino*. Photo by Louis Mélançon, Metropolitan Opera



Martina Arroyo in the Canadian Opera Company production of Verdi's Un Ballo in Mashera. Photo by Robert C. Ragsdale, f.r.p.s.

Born in New York City

At age 19, earned BA in Romance Languages from Hunter College

Won Metropolitan Opera Auditions

Debuted at Carnegie Hall in the American première of Pizzetti's Assassinio nella cattedrale

Debuted at Metropolitan Opera as the Celestial Voice in Verdi's Don Carlo

Performed in premiere of Samuel Barber's Andromache's Farewell commissioned by the New York Philharmonic in celebration of its opening season at Lincoln Center

1965

Debuted in first starring role at the Metropolitan Opera in Verdi's Aïda

Debuted at Covent Garden in Verdi's Aïda

1972

Debuted at La Scala in Verdi's Aïda opposite Plácido Domingo as Radames

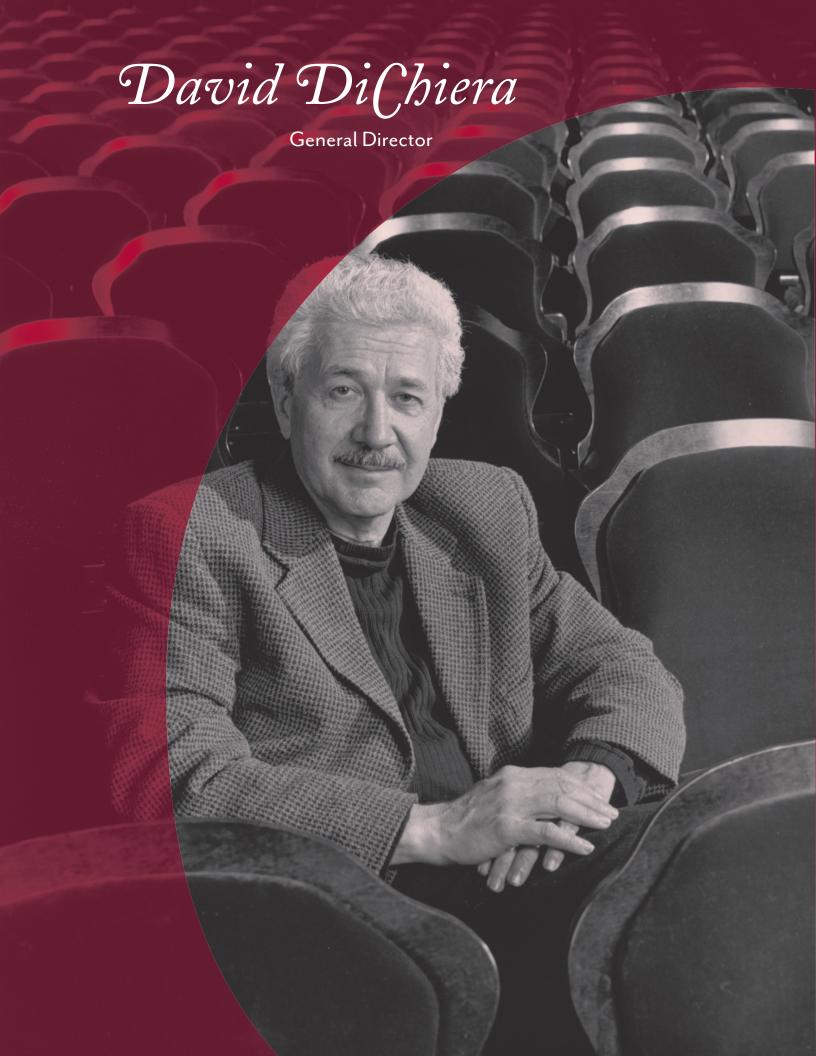
Appointed by President Gerald Ford to the National Council on the Arts

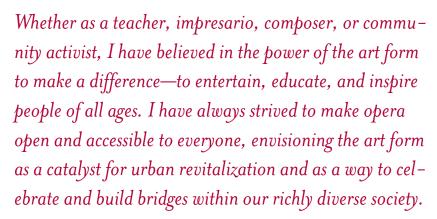
199th (and final) performance at the Metropolitan Opera in the title role of Verdi's Aïda

Performed in world premiere of Leslie Adams' Blake

2003

Established Martina Arroyo Foundation to assist young aspiring singers in the mastery of character development





Tavid DiChiera

orn in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, and raised in Los Angeles by Italian immigrant parents, David DiChiera pursued studies in composition with Lukas Foss at UCLA, earning his MA in 1956 with highest honors and election to Phi Beta Kappa Society. He was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to Italy where he simultaneously composed a sonata for the Naples Festival of Contemporary Music and researched and contributed a series of articles on 18th-century Italian opera to the world's leading music encyclopedias. Returning to Los Angeles, he joined the UCLA staff as an instructor, subsequently earning his PhD in musicology.

DiChiera's long and storied affiliation with Detroit began in earnest in 1962, when he became a professor and ultimately the chairman of music at Oakland University. During this time, he created Overture to Opera, a program of staged opera scenes and one-act operas that he narrated and toured to hundreds of schools and community centers throughout the state. Through this work he laid the foundation to create Michigan's own professional opera company, Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT), in 1971. Even while creating the state's first professional opera company, he simultaneously spearheaded the establishment of the

Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts in Detroit (1973), serving as its founding director.

However, DiChiera's impact on the field of opera would not remain focused solely on Detroit for long. Named chairman of the board of OPERA America (1979– 1983), his focus expanded from one opera company to opera organizations nationwide. During his tenure, two highly significant programs were initiated on behalf of the opera field, which continue to have a lasting impact on opera in America. Opera for the '80s and Beyond developed innovative methods of encouraging and funding new American musical theater works. Opera for a New America supported companies in their efforts to reach previously underserved segments of the population.

In 1981, DiChiera was appointed artistic director of the Dayton Opera Association. The success of his first season was evident in an increase in season ticket sales and a favorable critical response to the artistic standards he brought during his tenure. DiChiera made history in 1986, when he became the founding general director of Opera Pacific in Orange County, California, becoming the only general director in the nation to have founded and led two opera companies.

Opposite: David DiChiera at the Detroit Opera House. Photo courtesy of Michigan Opera Theatre



Photo courtesy of Michigan Opera Theatre

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

David DiChiera was not involved with these recordings, but he presented all of these works.

Copland: The Tender Land (Sony) Clements, Cassilly, Fredericks, Treigle, and Copland

Floyd: Of Mice and Men (Albany) Hawkins, Griffey, Futral, Maddalena, and Summers

Heggie: Dead Man Walking (Erato) Graham, von Stade, Packard, and Summers

Joplin: Treemonisha (Deutsche Grammophon) Balthrop, Allen, Rayam, White, and Schuller

Szymanowski: King Roger (Naxos) Zagórzanka, Malewicz-Madey, Ochman, Grychnik, Hiolski, Mroz, Wit, and Stryja

DiChiera retired from the Dayton Opera and Opera Pacific in 1993 and 1996, respectively, to devote his time and energy to the establishment of an opera house for Detroit. In so doing, MOT would become only one of a handful of American opera companies to own their own home. Through the multimillion dollar renovation of a 1920's movie theater, the Detroit Opera House opened its doors on MOT's 25th anniversary as legendary soprano Joan Sutherland cut the ribbon for the grand opening.

Throughout its history, MOT has been at the forefront of nurturing the careers of leading African-American artists, and DiChiera has been recognized both locally and nationally for these efforts. In his desire to present an opera whose story would resonate with the local Detroit community, DiChiera commissioned composer Richard Danielpour and author Toni Morrison to write the opera Margaret Garner, which became the first world premiere on the Detroit Opera House stage in 2005. Co-commissioned with Cincinnati Opera and Opera Company of Philadelphia, the work reverberated not only in Detroit, but also in communities throughout the country, receiving positive reviews from media outlets nationwide.

For his achievements in music and community leadership, DiChiera has received numerous honorary doctorates and has been recognized by the mayors of New York, San Francisco, New Orleans, and Detroit, as well as the governments of France and Italy. Whether it be through his academic accomplishments and scholarly contributions, his passion for creating and running opera organizations and performing arts centers, or the commissioning and premiering of new works, DiChiera's commitment to opera in America is truly immeasurable.



David DiChiera (center) with choreographer Eugene Loring (left) and composer Aaron Copland. Photo courtesy of Michigan Opera Theatre





Gregg Baker as Robert Garner, Denyce Graves as Margaret Garner, and Angela Brown as Cilla with members of the chorus in Michigan Opera Theatre's production of Margaret Garner. Photo by John Grigaitis



Marion Pop as Cyrano and José Luis Sola as Christian in Cyrano. Photo courtesy of Michigan Opera Theatre

Born in McKeesport, PA

Earned MA in Composition from UCLA

Awarded Fulbright scholarship for studies in Italy

1962

Earned PhD in Musicology from UCLA

Founder & general director of Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT)

1973

Founder and director of Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts, Detroit, Michigan

1979

Named chairman of the board for **OPERA** America

1981

Appointed artistic director of Dayton Opera (concurrent with MOT)

Founder and general director of Opera Pacific (concurrent w/MOT & Dayton Opera)

1996

Championed the efforts that led to the opening of the Detroit Opera House, on the occasion of MOT's 25th Anniversary

2000

Awarded Bridge Builders honor by Partners for Livable Communities

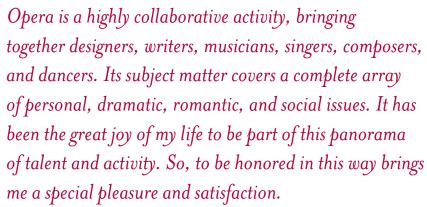
2005

Commissioned and premiered Richard Danielpour and Toni Morrison's Margaret Garner at MOT

2007

Premiered his opera, Cyrano, at MOT, with subsequent performances by Opera Philadelphia and Florida Grand Opera





∞ Philip Glass

orn in Chicago in 1937 and raised in Baltimore, Philip Glass' musical influences began at a young age during hours spent at his family's record store where he was exposed to an eclectic music collection including Western classical music and modern music of the time. His musical studies began at age six with the violin, continued at age eight with the flute through an accelerated program at the Peabody Conservatory, and by age 12 he began composing music.

In 1952 he entered the University of Chicago as a piano student of Marcus Rasking, who introduced him to the 12-tone music technique; he earned his BA in liberal arts at the age of 19. In 1956, he enrolled at the Juilliard School of Music as a composition student, but went back to Baltimore to work as a crane operator in the Bethlehem Steel Company to earn money to return to Juilliard. Return he did—receiving his BA in composition within two years (1959) and his MA in composition within four years (1961) under the tutelage of William Bergsma and Vincent Persichetti. Glass moved to Pittsburgh for two years on a Ford Foundation grant to write music for a variety of ensembles selected from the city's schools. He was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study harmony and counterpoint in Paris with the legendary pedagogue Nadia Boulanger. There he also worked closely with the sitar virtuoso and

composer Ravi Shankar. He returned to New York in 1967 and worked at various jobs to support himself as a composer, including as a plumber and taxi driver at night. In 1971 he formed the Philip Glass Ensemble—consisting of amplified woodwinds, keyboard synthesizers, and solo voice—which served as a performance outlet for his music. Visionary and savvy in many ways, he would become one of the first composers to start his own record label.

Throughout the 1960s his music focused on the rhythmic processes, exploring small amounts of musical material used with extensive repetition. The new musical style that Glass was evolving was eventually dubbed "minimalism." Yet, there has been nothing minimalist about his musical output. Glass himself avoided the term and preferred to speak of himself as a composer of "music with repetitive structures." Beginning in the mid-1970s Glass' music became increasingly engaged with harmony, melody, and chordal structure and through this exploration it gained in range of expression.

During the past 25 years, he has composed 24 operas, large and small; eight symphonies; two piano concertos; concertos for violin, piano, timpani, and saxophone quartet and orchestra; string quartets; a growing body of works for solo piano and organ; and soundtracks to films ranging from new scores for the stylized classics of Jean Cocteau

Opposite: Photo courtesy of Houston Grand Opera

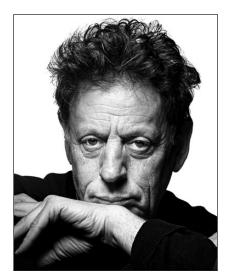


Photo by Raymond Meier

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

Philip Glass composed all selections.

Akhnaten (CBS Masterworks) Vargas, Liebermann, Esswood , Hannula, Holzapfel, Hauptmann, Warrilow, and Davies

The CIVIL warS: Act 5, The Rome Section (Nonesuch) Radvanovsky, Graves, Sabbatini, Zhou, Morscheck, Wilson, Anderson, and Davies

Einstein on the Beach (Nonesuch) Schuman and Riesman

Hydrogen Jukebox (Nonesuch) Eaton, Hart, Futral, Fracker, Purnhagen, Watson, Ginsberg, and Goldray

Satyagraha (CBS Masterworks) Cummings, Woods, Liss, Perry, McFarland, Reeve, and Keene

The Voyage (Orange Mountain Music) Bormann, Lichter, Vasar, Robertson, Ratzenböch, Lettner, Veláquez Diaz, Lerche, Mason, and Davies to a documentary by Errol Morris, from the groundbreaking soundtrack to Godfrey Reggio's Koyaanisqatsi to Stephen Daldry's The Hours (for which he won a BAFTA Award). His collaborators have ranged from pop artists such as Paul Simon and Linda Ronstadt to writers Allen Ginsberg and Doris Lessing, among many others.

Many of his operas have been produced by the world's leading opera houses. Einstein on the Beach (1976) was the first work he wrote for the stage. He premiered Satyagraha in 1980 and Akhnaten in 1983, both to critical acclaim. The 1990s saw nearly 10 opera premieres by the prolific composer, including Hydrogen Jukebox, Orfée, and Les Enfants Terribles. In 2005, Waiting for the Barbarians premiered, based on the book by J.M. Coetzee, and in 2007 Appomattox premiered, a story about the end of the United States Civil War. His most recent opera, Kepler, about the work of the eponymous 17th-century scientist and mathematician, premiered in Austria in 2009. He presents lectures, workshops, and solo keyboard performances around the world, and continues to appear regularly with the Philip Glass Ensemble. Indeed, he is the first composer to win a wide, multigenerational audience in the opera house, the concert hall, the dance world, in film, and in popular music.





The 1976 Metropolitan Opera production of Philip Glass' Einstein on the Beach. Photo by Babette Mangolte



Richard Bernstein as Lord Krishna in Philip Glass' Satyagraha. Photo by Ken Howard, Metropolitan Opera

1937

Born in Baltimore, MD

1960

While at Juilliard, won BMI Student Composer Award, one of the most prestigious international prizes for young composers

1964

Awarded Fulbright scholarship to study composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, France

Formed the Philip Glass Ensemble

Einstein on the Beach presented at the Metropolitan Opera

Premiered Satyagraha at the Netherlands Opera

1984

Premiered Akhnaten at the Staatstheater Stuttgart

Autobiography published: Music by Philip Glass

1990

Premiered The Voyage at the Metropolitan Opera

2001

Premiered 20th opera, Galileo Galilei, at Goodman Theatre

Premiered Waiting for the Barbarians at the Theater Erfurt

2007

Premiered Appomattox at the San Francisco Opera





It has been an inspiring journey unearthing this beautiful music, and a privilege sharing it with the public. . . . The NEA is a vital force in promoting and maintaining opera as a significant art form in American culture. I would like to thank them for recognizing my work.

∞ Eve Queler

orn in New York City, Eve Queler was drawn to music from her earliest years. She began piano lessons at age five and then attended the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music and Art in New York City. In 1956 she entered the Mannes College of Music and began studying conducting under the tutelage of Carl Bamberger. A Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund grant enabled her to pursue further studies in conducting with Joseph Rosenstock and accompaniment with Paul Ulanowsky and Paul Berl. Queler went on to study conducting with Walter Susskind and Leonard Slatkin in St. Louis, and with Igor Markevitch and Herbert Blomstedt in Europe.

Early in her career, she served as rehearsal accompanist and coach with the Metropolitan Opera Studio. Between 1965–1970, she was an assistant conductor to 2009 NEA Opera Honoree Julius Rudel at the New York City Opera, where she played for rehearsals and auditions, coached singers, and occasionally conducted at rehearsals.

In 1968 she created the New York Opera Workshop (which would later become the Opera Orchestra of New York) to present concerts by established opera performers and emerging talents. As music director, Queler has shepherded the institution since its establishment, and has conducted more than 100 operas in concert at Carnegie Hall. While opera audiences are engaged through the visual and dramatic elements of the art form, Queler has captivated audiences through unstaged concert versions, where the focus is entirely on what is heard.

Queler is a faithful champion of opera who has tirelessly dedicated herself to researching and unveiling the unknown riches of the genre. She has presented long-neglected and little-known operas, many of which had rarely or never been heard in the United States. Her pioneering efforts have led national opera companies to add to their permanent repertoires works that received their first major modern performance at OONY, such as Verdi's I Lombardi, Donizetti's La Favorita, and Zandonai's Francesca da Rimini.

Queler has championed many neglected Russian and Czech operas that were staples in Central Europe but virtually unknown in the United States. She was the first conductor in this country to perform Mussorgsky's unfinished Khovanshchina with orchestration by Shostakovitch. She was first to bring to American stages Czechlanguage performances of Janáček's Kátya Kabanová (1979) and Jenufa (1988), and Dvořák's Rusalka (1987). Her performances of Tchaikovsky's The Maid of Orleans, featuring Dolora Zajick and Jorma Hynninen, marked the American premiere of the Russian language version of the opera.

Opposite: Photo courtesy of Opera Frankfurt



Photo by Steve Edson

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

Eve Queler is conductor on all selections.

Donizetti: *La Favorita* (Gala) with Verrett, Kraus, Elvira, and Morris

Janáček: Jenůfa (Bis) with Benacková, Rysanek, Ochman, and Kazaras

Massenet: Le Cid (Sony) with Bumbry, Domingo, and Plishka

Puccini: Edgar (CBS Masterworks) with Scotto, Killebrew, Bergonzi, Sardinero, and Munkittrick

Smetana: *Dalibor* (Ponto) with Gedda, Monk, Foss, and Plishka

Strauss: *Guntram* (Sony) with Tokody, Goldberg, and Sólyom-Nagy

Well-regarded for her ability to spot bright new talent, Queler has provided critical early exposure to many opera luminaries such as Renée Fleming, Dmitri Hvorostovsky, James Morris, Lauren Flanigan, Stephanie Blythe, and Deborah Voigt. She provided a debut venue for dozens of artists, including José Carreras, Aprile Millo, Ghena Dimitrova, Richard Leech, and Jennifer Larmore, who went on to enjoy major American careers.

Not only did Queler attract emerging vocal talent but also that of established performers in search of uncommon vehicles in which to display their voices, such as Plácido Domingo, Nicolai Gedda, Montserrat Caballé, and Alfredo Kraus. She presented singers in works they sought to perform before the major opera houses would stage them, such as OONY's widely hailed 1974 presentation of Massenet's *Le Cid* with Plácido Domingo, and Donizetti's *Parisina d'Este* with Montserrat Caballé in that same year.

Queler has been named a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (2002), one of the highest awards presented by the French government, for her commitment to French operas. She has also received the Sanford Medal, Yale University's highest musical honor. She was awarded the Touchstone Award from Women in Music in recognition of her visionary spirit as one of the "Women Who Make a Difference."

It is through Queler's dedication that previously abandoned works have become part of the standard repertory in American opera houses. Through her curatorial role each season, Queler treats her audiences with the same care and commitment as she does her singers.





Eve Queler conducting the Opera Orchestra of New York. Photo courtesy of Eve Queler



Eve Queler's 100th concert at Carnegie Hall. Photo courtesy of Opera Orchestra of New York

Born in New York, NY

1956

Enrolled at the Mannes College of Music; studied conducting with Carl Bamberger

Conducting debut of Cavalleria Rusticana at an outdoor concert in Fairlawn, New Jersey

Founded New York Opera Workshop (would become Opera Orchestra of New York)

Opera Orchestra of New York moves to Carnegie Hall, commencing 40-year relationship

Tenor José Carreras debuts with OONY (at age 24) under Maestro Queler's baton

1974

Presented Massenet's Le Cid with Plácido Domingo in the starring role

First American staging of Janáček's Kátya Kabanová

First American staging of Janáček's Jenůfa

Soprano Renee Fleming debuts in the OONY young artist program

American premiere of the Russian language version of Tchaikovsky's The Maid of Orleans

2002

Awarded Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the government of France

Celebrates her 100th Carnegie Hall performance as Music Director of OONY in a repertoire that included works by Rossini, Donizetti, Meyerbeer, Ponchielli, Ciléa, Verdi, and Puccini

Previous NEA Opera Honors Recipients

John Adams

2009 Recipient



Photo by Margaretta Mitchell

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

John Adams composed all selections.

The Death of Klinghoffer (Elektra/Nonesuch) with Maddalena, Perry, Young, Sylvan, Hammons, Felty, Friedman, Nadler; conducted by Nagano

Doctor Atomic (BBC/Opus Arte/DVD) with Finley, Rivera, Owens, Fink, Maddalena; conducted by Renes

A Flowering Tree (Nonesuch) with Owens, Rivera, Thomas; conducted by Adams

El Niño (Nonesuch) with Upshaw, Hunt Lieberson, White; conducted by Nagano

Nixon in China (Nonesuch) with Maddalena, Sylvan, Hammons, Duykers, Page, Craney; conducted by de Waart

The Wound-Dresser (Nonesuch) with Sylvan; conducted by Adams

John Adams' work has profoundly influenced opera. His unique musical voice, rooted in minimalism, skillfully confronts the complex realities of our world in ways that challenge and elevate audiences.

Born in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1947, by age 13 he was an accomplished clarinetist and was determined to be a composer. After graduating from Harvard, Adams moved to California to become part of the new-music scene.

Initially, Adams was an instrumental composer. When the Houston Grand Opera commissioned his first opera, *Nixon in China* (1987), Adams had never written for solo voice. Since then he has written three more operas, *The Death of Klinghoffer* (1991), *Doctor Atomic* (2005) and *A Flowering Tree* (2006), as well as a song cycle, a "songplay," and an oratorio. *Nixon in China* has become one of the most frequently presented operas of our time, and *Doctor Atomic* has already been seen on five major international stages.

Adams has written more than 20 orchestra works, nearly 10 chamber works, film scores, piano solos and duets, and numerous arrangements and orchestrations. His work *On the Transmigration of Souls* (2002) won the Pulitzer Prize.

A guest orchestra conductor, he has been an innovative force within many musical organizations. He instituted the renowned New and Unusual Music series at the San Francisco Symphony, where he was also composer-inresidence. He served as creative chair for the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra; music director of the Cabrillo Festival; and artist-in-association with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. While holding the composer's chair at Carnegie Hall, he established the In Your Ear festival, and conducted the first public concert at the new Zankel Hall. Currently, he serves as creative chair for the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Adams made his literary debut with a volume of memoirs and commentary on American musical life, entitled *Hallelujah Junction* (Farrar, Straus, & Giroux 2008).

When I was a young composer, my first orchestra work was funded by a small grant from the NEA, support that came at a critical moment in my creative life. Thirty years later, and having composed five operas, I find myself once again thanking the Endowment for its encouragement and for maintaining the tradition of American classical music.

Tohn Adams



Gerald Finley as J. Robert Oppenheimer in John Adams' Doctor Atomic. Photo by Nick Heavican/Metropolitan Opera

1947

Born in Worcester, MA

Creates New and Unusual Music series for the San Francisco Symphony

San Francisco Symphony world premiere of Harmonium for orchestra and chorus; becomes first SFS Composer-in-Residence

1987

Houston Grand Opera world premiere of Nixon in China

La Monnaie, Brussels, world premiere of The Death of Klinghoffer

1995

University of California, Berkeley, world premiere of the songplay I Was Looking at the Ceiling and Then I Saw the Sky

2000

Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris, world premiere of *El Niño*, a Nativity oratorio

2003

On the Transmigration of Souls, a work commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to commemorate those killed in the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center, wins Pulitzer Prize

2005

San Francisco Opera world premiere of **Doctor Atomic**

2006

MuseumsQuartier, Vienna, world premiere of A Flowering Tree

Frank Corsaro

2009 Recipient



Frank Corsaro directing Mozart's *The Magic Flute* at the Houston Grand Opera. Photo courtesy of Houston Grand Opera

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

Although Frank Corsaro was not directly involved in these recordings, each work is one that he either helped introduce to the public or with which he has important associations.

Floyd: Susannah (VAI) with Curtin, Treigle; conducted by Andersson

Floyd: Of Mice and Men (Albany) with Griffey, Hawkins, Futral, Maddalena; conducted by Summers

Janáček: The Cunning Little Vixen (Chandos) with Watson, Montague, Allen, Howell; conducted by Rattle

Joplin: *Treemonisha* (Deutsche Grammophon) with Balthrop, Allen, White; conducted by Schuller

Pasatieri: Frau Margot (Albany) with Flanagan, Risley, Smith; conducted by Illick

Ravel: L'Enfant et les Sortilèges and L'Heure Espagnole (Kultur/DVD) with Buchan, Steiger; conducted by Rattle and Edwards For more than half a century, Frank Corsaro has brought his keen director's eye to countless opera productions, always displaying a rare understanding for the balance of words, music, and theater.

Born in New York City in 1924, Corsaro began his career as an actor but turned to directing because it better served his imagination. He became involved with the Actors Studio (which he went on to direct), and in 1955 he directed Michael Gazzo's powerful drama of a war veteran's heroin addiction, A Hatful of Rain, which ran for two years on Broadway.

Julius Rudel invited Corsaro to direct Carlisle Floyd's Susannah at the New York City Opera in 1958—the production's success led to Corsaro's long, rich association with City Opera, where Corsaro's legendary productions helped secure the company's reputation for artistic daring. He brought new life to traditional fare such as Verdi's La Traviata and Puccini's Madama Butterfly, in part through his emphasis on realism. He worked similar magic with contemporary or lesser-known works, including Hoiby's Summer and Smoke; Korngold's Die Tote Stadt; Prokofiev's The Fiery Angel; and Ward's The Crucible.

Corsaro has had two particularly interesting creative partnerships. One is with Carlisle Floyd, with whom he has worked on many occasions. The other is with the writer and illustrator Maurice Sendak. Their imaginative productions include Prokofiev's Love for Three Oranges; Janáček's The Cunning Little Vixen; Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel; Ravel's L'Heure Espagnole and L'Enfant et Les Sortilèges, and Knussen's Where the Wild Things Are.

Corsaro was the artistic director of the Juilliard Opera Center from 1988 to 2007. In addition to teaching at Juilliard, he directed a heady mix of operas throughout the United States and Europe

In a rich cross-fertilization, Corsaro has always moved easily between theater and opera. Impressively, he has also enriched the art form as the librettist for such works as *Heloise and Abelard* by Stephen Paulus, and Thomas Pasatieri's *Frau Margot* and *Before Breakfast*.

In 1958, I was invited by Julius Rudel to direct my first opera, Carlisle Floyd's magical Susannah. What happened in Susannah and several other productions in that New York City Opera season on 55th Street heralded something new on the horizon. Under the guidance of a small group of young directors, with theater backgrounds in their blood, singing and hearing were conjoined, bringing new life into the operatic repertoire. I am very grateful to the National Endowment for paying respect and even homage to this amazing transformation. By honoring me today, they have opened the door to equally deserving colleagues in the directing field.

Trank Corsaro



The Fort Worth Opera's production of Thomas Pasatieri's Frau Margot, for which Frank Corsaro directed and wrote the libretto. Photo by Ellen Appel

1924

Born in New York, NY

Directs Broadway premiere of Michael Gazzo's A Hatful of Rain

Begins long association with the New York City Opera, directing Susannah

1961

Directs Broadway premiere of Tennessee Williams' The Night of the Iguana

1970

Directs world premiere of Floyd's Of Mice and Men at Seattle Opera

Directs world premiere of Delius' Margot La Rouge at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis

1984

Makes Metropolitan Opera debut directing Rinaldo, the Met's first Handel work

1988

Named artistic director of the Juilliard Opera Center

1988

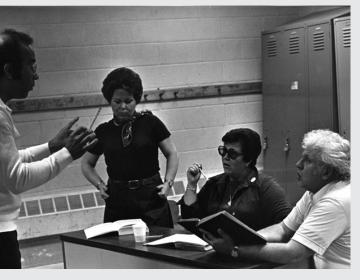
Appointed artistic director of the Actors Studio in New York City

2007

Directs world premiere of Thomas Pasatieri's Frau Margot, for which Corsaro wrote the libretto, at Fort Worth Opera

Marilyn Horne

2009 Recipient



Marilyn Horne in rehearsal of the Metropolitan Opera's production of Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète*. Photo by James Heffernan/Metropolitan Opera

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

Marilyn Horne is a featured singer on all selections.

Barber, Bernstein, Bolcom: I Will Breathe a Mountain (RCA Victor) Sixteen American songs with Martin Katz and the Tokyo String Quartet

Bellini: *Norma* (Decca) with Sutherland, Alexander; conducted by Bonynge

Bizet: Carmen (Deutsche Grammophon) with McCracken, Maliponte, Krause; conducted by Bernstein

Bellini, Donizetti, Gluck, Handel, Rossini, Saint-Saëns and others: Just for the Record: The Golden Voice (Decca)

Rossini: L'Italiana in Algeri (Deutsche Grammophon/ DVD) with Ahlstedt, Montsarlo; conducted by Levine

Rossini: Semiramide (Decca) with Sutherland, Clark, Rouleau, Serge; conducted by Bonynge

Marilyn Horne's voice combines power, flexibility, and extraordinary musicianship and in both opera and recital, Horne set a new standard and expanded the repertoire for generations of mezzo-sopranos to come.

Born in Bradford, Pennsylvania, in 1934, she sang nearly from birth. At 20, she made an enduring impression by dubbing Dorothy Dandridge's singing voice in the movie *Carmen Jones*. In 1956, under the guidance of Robert Craft and Igor Stravinsky, she appeared at the Venice Festival. She returned home to the United States in 1960 and made her San Francisco Opera debut as Marie in Berg's *Wozzeck*; a year later she made her Lyric Opera of Chicago debut as Lora in the premiere of Vittorio Giannini's *The Harvest*.

Horne quickly established herself as a brilliant bel canto interpreter, particularly in operas by Handel and Rossini. She sang the title role in the American premiere of Handel's *Rinaldo* at the Houston Grand Opera in 1975, and performed it nine years later at the Metropolitan Opera. It was the first time the company had ever staged a Handel work, and it was directed by NEA Opera Honoree Frank Corsaro. Among the many other roles on which she has left her stamp are Isabella in Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri*; Adalgisa in Bellini's *Norma*; Arsace in Rossini's *Semiramide*; and Samira in Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles*. Horne is equally celebrated and revered for her concert and recital singing and has graced virtually all of the great stages of the world, including the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Covent Garden, and Carnegie Hall.

Through the Marilyn Horne Foundation, young singers have received important training and performance opportunities in the art of the recital. Alumni of the program include some of the greatest vocalists on stage today: Stephanie Blythe, David Daniels, Michelle DeYoung, Lawrence Brownlee, and Isabelle Bayrakdarian. Horne is the winner of innumerable awards, including the National Medal of the Arts (1992), Kennedy Center Honors (1995), and France's Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres.



This is an enormous affirmation of a long life in opera and in music. It couldn't be better. I hope that this award will create more and more interest in obera and the NEA. I have held the thought for many years that the United States should have a Secretary of the Arts (Culture) in the Cabinet, and hope that this could add to a growing movement that seems to be in progress towards that end. My deepest thanks to those who chose me.

∞ Marilyn Horne



Marilyn Horne in the Metropolitan Opera production of Rossini's L'Italiana in Algeri. Photo courtesy of Metropolitan Opera

1934

Born in Bradford, PA

Makes professional debut singing "Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms" at local political rally

1954

Dubs voice of Dorothy Dandridge in the film Carmen Jones

1957

Joins Germany's Gelsenkirchen Municipal Opera

1960s

Debuts with San Francisco Opera as Marie in Wozzeck (1960); Carnegie Hall as Agnese in Beatrice di Tenda opposite Joan Sutherland (1961); Covent Garden as Marie in Wozzeck (1964); La Scala as Jocasta in Oedipus Rex (1969)

Metropolitan Opera debut as Adalgisa in Norma

1975

Sings title role in American premiere of Rinaldo at Houston Grand Opera

Sings Samira in world premiere of Corigliano's The Ghosts of Versailles at the Met

1994

Establishes Marilyn Horne Foundation to preserve and support the art of the vocal recital

With a performance in Laramie, WY, achieves goal of singing in all 50 states

Lotfi Mansouri

2009 Recipient



Lotfi Mansouri, as stage director, in rehearsal for Houston Grand Opera's production of *Boris Godunov*. Photo by Ava Jean Mears

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

Although Lotfi Mansouri was not directly involved in these recordings, each work is one that he helped introduce to the public or with which he has important associations.

Glass: Satyagraha (CBS Masterworks) with Perry, Cummings, Liss, Reeve; conducted by Keene

Heggie: *Dead Man Walking* (Erato) with Graham, von Stade, Packard; conducted by Summers

Massenet: Hérodiade (Sony) with Domingo, Fleming, Zajick, Pons; conducted by Gergiev

Previn: A Streetcar Named Desire (Deutsche Grammophon) with Fleming, Futral, Gilfry, Griffey; conducted by Previn

Strauss: *Elektra* (Decca) with Nilsson, Resnik, Collier, Krause; conducted by Solti

Wallace: Harvey Milk (Teldec) with Orth, Very, Bishop, Jacobs, Maddalena; conducted by Runnicles

Lotfi Mansouri led, brilliantly, two of the most important opera companies in North America, and has directed scores of productions throughout the world. But with one act, Mansouri forever changed how audiences experienced the art form: supertitles (translations of foreign language works that are projected above the stage).

Born in 1929 in Tehran, Iran, Mansouri traveled to Los Angeles to study medicine at UCLA. After seeing *Madama Butterfly* at the Hollywood Bowl, he realized his heart and his future was in opera. He began teaching and directing opera at local colleges and in 1959 became the assistant to director Herbert Graf at the Music Academy of the West.

From 1960 to 1966, Mansouri perfected his craft as resident stage director of the Zürich Opera. For the next decade, he served as the head stage director at the Geneva Opera. He was a constant presence at the Santa Fe Opera in the late '60s and early '70s, where he directed a dozen works, from bel canto masterpieces to Verdi (Rigoletto, La Traviata), Puccini (Tosca), Strauss (Der Rosenkavalier), and Berg (Wozzeck).

In 1976, Mansouri became general director of the Canadian Opera Company. He revolutionized opera by ushering in supertitles at a 1983 performance of Strauss' *Elektra*. To the enduring gratitude of audiences everywhere, opera companies throughout the world have adopted the idea.

During his tenure as general director of the San Francisco Opera (1988–2001), the company produced its first commercial recordings. His establishment of the Pacific Visions program to commission new works and to perform little-known works led to some of the most compelling operas of our time, including John Adams' The Death of Klinghoffer, Conrad Susa's The Dangerous Liaisons, André Previn's A Streetcar Named Desire, and Jake Heggie's Dead Man Walking.

Mansouri is a Chevalier of Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, and his autobiography Lotfi Mansouri: An Operatic Journey was published in spring 2010.

For me, opera is the greatest art form created by the human mind, and my goal has always been to share it with everyone. It is a magnificent artistic banquet, with something for every taste. This recognition by the NEA is a great validation of opera, and strengthens its position in the cultural landscape. Opera has been my life for more than 50 years. In those years, it has given me some magical and extraordinary experiences. To be recognized and honored in this way by the NEA, to receive the country's highest honor for the art form, is a wonderful finale to my life in opera.

∞ Lofti Mansouri



San Francisco Opera's production of Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, during Lotfi Mansouri's tenure as general director. Photo by Marty Sohl

1929

Born in Tehran, Iran

1960

Becomes resident stage director of the Zürich Opera

1966

Appointed head stage director at the Geneva Opera

1971

Named artistic adviser to Iran's Ministry of Culture

1976

Becomes general director, Canadian Opera Company (COC)

1983

Introduces supertitles with *Elektra* at COC

1988

Becomes general director of the San Francisco Opera (SFO)

1992

Establishes SFO's Pacific Visions program to foster new and unusual repertoire

1994

Commissions Conrad Susa's The Dangerous Liaisons, world premiere at SFO

2000

Commissions Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, world premiere at SFO

Fulius Rudel

2009 Recipient



Julius Rudel conducting for the Houston Grand Opera. Photo courtesy of Houston Grand Opera

SELECTED CDS/DVDS **CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION**

Julius Rudel is conductor on all selections.

Boito: Mefistofele (EMI Classics) with Treigle, Caballé,

Domingo

Donizetti: Roberto Devereux (VAI/DVD) with Sills,

Marsee, Alexander, Fredricks

Handel: Julius Caesar (RCA Victor) with Treigle, Sills, Forrester, Wolff

Massenet: Manon (Deutsche Grammophon) with Sills,

Gedda, Souzay, Bacquier

Various: Vienna, City of My Dreams (EMI Classics)

with Domingo

Weill: Die Bürgschaft (EMI Classics) with Thompson,

Daniecki, Travis

Julius Rudel took a shoestring company, the New York City Opera, and made it a fearless international contender, and in so doing, promoted and encouraged American opera and American artists at a time when both were in desperate need of cheerleaders.

Born in Vienna in 1921, Rudel absorbed its musical traditions and adroitly mixed them with American ones. He arrived in New York City as a teenage refugee, and studied at the Mannes School of Music. In 1943, he joined the New York City Opera as a rehearsal pianist and soon thereafter made his conducting debut with The Gypsy Baron.

During his 22-year tenure as general director/principal conductor of City Opera, imaginative programming, from the baroque to the brand-new, was the rule. Contemporary American operas included Marc Blitzstein's Regina, Douglas Moore's The Ballad of Baby Doe, Dominick Argento's Miss Havisham's Fire, and Carlisle Floyd's Jonathan Wade. City Opera presented more than fifty 20thcentury operas, nineteen world premieres, and seven U.S. premieres. Among the many great singers and directors with whom he worked are Beverly Sills, Plácido Domingo, Samuel Ramey, Shirley Verrett, Norman Treigle, Phyllis Curtin, Sherrill Milnes, Frank Corsaro, Theodore Mann, and Tito Capobianco.

Many companies have benefited from his guidance: Kennedy Center in Washington, DC (first artistic director); music director at Virginia's Wolf Trap Festival, the Cincinnati May Festival, and the Caramoor Festival in Katonah, NY; Opera Company of Philadelphia (music advisor); National Opera Institute (chairman); and the Buffalo Philharmonic (music director).

In a career that spans more than six decades and has placed him on podiums throughout the world, Rudel has conducted more than 165 operas. He is perhaps best appreciated for his efforts to revive Kurt Weill's music, including Die Bürgschaft, Lost in the Stars, and Silverlake. Among Rudel's many honors are the Opera News Award, France's Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres, New York City's Handel Medallion, and the Kurt Weill Foundation's Distinguished Achievement Award.

Though I have traveled through many countries and have had the great fortune to conduct in most of the world's great opera houses, I have always considered the United States of America my home. Ever since I arrived in New York in 1938, chased by the Nazis from my childhood home in Vienna, I have been welcomed here and given opportunities I could never have imagined. To be recognized in this way by the National Endowment for the Arts is an honor I will cherish. And it is particularly rewarding to know that the incredible art form that is opera is valued and continues to thrive.

∞ Julius Rudel



Matthew Polenzani as Tamino in the Metropolitan Opera's production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, orchestra conducted by Julius Rudel. Photo by Ken Howard/Metropolitan Opera

1921

Born in Vienna, Austria

1938

Immigrates to the United States and then attends Greenwich House Music School as a scholarship student (1939– 40), followed by Mannes College of Music (1940–42)

1943

Joins fledgling company, New York City Opera (NYCO), as rehearsal pianist, and makes conducting debut with *The Gypsy Baron* the following year (1944)

1957

Named general director/principal conductor of NYCO

1958

Presides over NYCO's season of 10 contemporary American operas

1966

Conducts Ginastera's Don Rodrigo on NYCO's first night at Lincoln Center

1969

Named music director of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

1978

Conducts Massenet's Werther in debut at the Metropolitan Opera

1979

Becomes music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra

1999

Conducts American premiere of Weill's Die Bürgschaft at Spoleto Festival USA

Carlisle Floyd

2008 Recipient

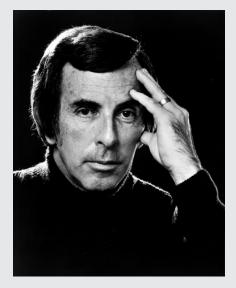


Photo courtesy of Houston Grand Opera

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

Carlisle Floyd composed all selections.

Susannah (Virgin Classics) with Studer, Hadley, Ramey; conducted by Nagano

The Sojourner and Mollie Sinclair (VAI) with Neway, Treigle; conducted by Rudel

Markheim (VAI) with Crofoot, Schuh, Treigle; conducted by Andersson

Of Mice and Men (Albany) with Evans and others; conducted by Summers

Willie Stark (DVD: Newport Classic) Louisiana State University production

Cold Sassy Tree (Albany) with Racette and others; conducted by Summers

One of the most admired opera composers and librettists of the last half century, Carlisle Floyd speaks in a uniquely American voice, capturing both the cadences and the mores of our society.

Born in Latta, South Carolina, in 1926, Floyd studied both composition and piano. He taught at South Florida University from 1947 to 1976 while actively composing, and in 1976 became the M. D. Anderson Professor of Music at the University of Houston. In Houston, he and David Gockley established the important Houston Grand Opera Studio, which for more than three decades has helped train young artists in the full spectrum of opera. (Graduates include Erie Mills, Denyce Graves, and Joyce DiDonato.)

Floyd's operas are rooted in America, both in subject and in style, and are widely performed in the United States and abroad. They include Susannah (1955), The Passion of Jonathan Wade (1962; revised, 1990), Of Mice and Men (1970), Bilby's Doll (1976), Willie Stark (1981), and Cold Sassy Tree (2000). A 2001 inductee of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Floyd has received numerous honors, such as a Guggenheim Fellowship and the National Opera Institute's Award for Service to American Opera. He was the first chairman of the NEA's Opera/Musical Theater Panel, which the agency created in 1976. In 2004, the President of the United States awarded him a National Medal of Arts.

When I received the call from [the NEA Chairman], I was a little stunned. My feeling was not so much that I felt undeserving, but that there were other composers also deserving. I am less stunned now, but no less deeply grateful for being selected for this unique honor.

∞ Carlisle Floyd



A scene from Of Mice and Men. Photo by George Hixson, courtesy of Houston Grand Opera

1926

Born in Latta, SC

Begins his teaching career at Florida State University

1955

Florida State University stages world premiere of Susannah

1962

New York City Opera world premiere of The Passion of Jonathan Wade

1976

Becomes M.D. Anderson Professor of Music at University of Houston

Co-founds, with David Gockley, the Houston Grand Opera Studio

1981

PBS's Great Performances presents world premiere of Willie Stark

1993

World premiere of A Time to Dance, a choral work, at American Choral Directors Association convention in San Antonio

2000

Cold Sassy Tree has world premiere at Houston Grand Opera

Richard Gaddes

2008 Recipient

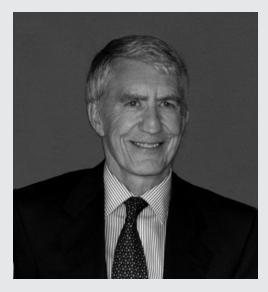


Photo by Ken Howard, courtesy of Santa Fe Opera

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

While Richard Gaddes is not associated with these recordings, the following works represent those that he has helped to introduce or bring to the attention of American opera audiences.

Rameau: *Pigmalion* (Virgin Classics Veritas) with Fournié, Fouchécourt; conducted by Niquet

Bretón: La Verbena de la Paloma (DVD Decca) with Lopez, Suárez; conducted by Roa

Britten: Albert Herring (Naxos) with Palmer, Barstow, Lloyd, Finley; conducted by Bedford

Britten: Owen Wingrave (DVD Kultur Video) with

Barstow, Finley; conducted by Nagano

Janáček: The Cunning Little Vixen (Decca) with Popp; conducted by Mackerras

Golijov: Ainadamar (DG) with Upshaw; conducted by Spano

Richard Gaddes has spent most of his professional life guiding and raising the profile of two important regional American companies, the Santa Fe Opera, from which he retired as general director in 2008, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

Born in Wallsend, England, in 1942 and now a permanent United States resident, Gaddes studied at London's Trinity College of Music. In the '60s, he launched a program of lunchtime concerts by young musicians at Wigmore Hall, an initiative that is emblematic of his work since: in both Santa Fe and Saint Louis, he has championed young singers. In 1969, at the invitation of Santa Fe Opera founder John Crosby, he became the company's artistic administrator. He founded the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis in 1976 and ran it until 1985, but remained a consultant to Santa Fe. He returned there full-time in 1994, and later succeeded John Crosby as general director.

Throughout his tenure at both companies, Gaddes made a reputation for programming adventurous repertoire both old and new, imaginative casting and productions, building audiences, and spotting young stars before others did. A former vice president of OPERA America, he has served on many arts boards and is, at present, a member of the board of directors of the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts. His list of honors includes the National Institute for Music Theatre Award and the Young Audiences' Cultural Achievement Award.

It's rewarding, but also humbling, to be part of this quartet of recipients, the other three of whom are icons in the world of opera. The job of an impresario differs so much from that of composers, conductors, and singers. In my case it is the magnificent work of the Santa Fe Opera family—staff, performers, and technicians—that is being recognized with me. I am indeed grateful to the National Endowment for the Arts for this honor.

Tichard Gaddes



Gaddes (right) with Jonathan Miller, director of Cosi fan tutte at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Photo by Ken Howard, courtesy of Opera Theatre of Saint Louis

1942

Born in Wallsend, England

1969

Named artistic administrator of Santa Fe Opera

1976

Founds Opera Theatre of Saint Louis (OTSL)

1982

World premiere at OTSL of *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, by Stephen Paulus

1985

Joruri, by Japanese composer Minoru Miki, has world premiere at OTSL

1994

Returns to Santa Fe Opera as associate director

2000

Becomes general director of Santa Fe Opera

2003

Madame Mao, by Bright Sheng, has world premiere in Santa Fe

2005

Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar*, with a reworked libretto, presented in Santa Fe

2006

American premiere of Thomas Adès'
The Tempest in Santa Fe

James Levine

2008 Recipient



Photo by Peter Hastings, courtesy of the Cleveland Orchestra Archives

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

James Levine is conductor on all selections.

Wagner: Der Ring des Nibelungen (CD and DVD; DG)

with the Metropolitan Opera

Strauss: Elektra (DVD; DG) with Nilsson, Rysanek

Tchaikovsky: *Eugene Onegin* (DG) with Burchuladze, Freni, von Otter, T. Allen

Berlioz: Les Troyens (DVD; DG) with Norman, Troyanos, Domingo

Corigliano: *The Ghosts of Versailles* (DVD; DG) with Stratas, Fleming, Horne, Clark, G. Quilico, Hagegard (currently not in circulation)

Lieberson: Neruda Songs (Nonesuch) with Hunt Lieberson Since he first took the podium at the Metropolitan Opera in 1971, James Levine has conducted nearly 2,500 performances there—a record number—and his repertoire is equally staggering: 85 operas. He is noted for his collaboration with singers, but equally important is his work with the Met orchestra, which he has fine-tuned into one of the world's leading ensembles.

Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1943, Levine excelled as a pianist even in childhood. Setting his course as a conductor, he graduated from Juilliard in 1964, and in that same year was invited by George Szell to join the Cleveland Orchestra as the youngest assistant conductor in its long history. Over the next several years, he led many orchestras, including the Metropolitan Opera's, and in 1975 became the company's music director. He has led Met premieres of works by numerous composers, including Mozart, Verdi, Stravinsky, Berg, Schoenberg, Rossini, Berlioz, and Weill, as well as the world premieres of two American operas, John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* and John Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*.

While maintaining his position at the Met, Levine has continued to work as an accompanist and chamber musician and has led orchestras around the world. From 1973 to 1993, he was music director of the Ravinia Festival, the summer residence of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; from 1999 to 2004, he was chief conductor of the Munich Philharmonic. In 2004, Levine became music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, a post he continues to hold. With the BSO, he has introduced new works by such composers as Elliott Carter, William Bolcom, Milton Babbitt, Charles Wuorinen, and John Harbison.

Among the numerous awards Levine has received are the Gold Medal for Service to Humanity from the National Institute of Social Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Letters' 2005 award for Distinguished Service to the Arts. In 1997, the President of the United States awarded him a National Medal of Arts and, in 2003, he was a recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors.

In the years since its inception, the National Endowment for the Arts has contributed enormously to the health and growth of the arts in the United States. It is a great honor for me to be among the first recipients of this award, and an honor to the art form itself that the NEA is recognizing the important place of opera in the artistic life of this country.

Tames Levine



Stephen Portman, George Szell, Michael Charry, and Levine (left to right). Photo by Peter Hastings, courtesy of the Cleveland Orchestra Archives

1943

Born in Cincinnati, OH

1953

Debuts as piano soloist with Cincinnati Orchestra playing Mendelssohn's *Piano Concerto No.* 2

1964

Invited by George Szell to become assistant conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra

1971

Conducts *Tosca* in Metropolitan Opera debut

1976

Appointed music director of the Metropolitan Opera

1977

Inaugurates Metropolitan Opera Presents on television, conducting La Bohème

1980

Founds the Met's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program

1991

Conducts world premiere of John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* at the Met

1999

Leads first Met performance of Schoenberg's Moses und Aron

2004

While remaining at the Met, becomes Boston Symphony Orchestra music director

Leontyne Price

2008 Recipient



Photo courtesy of Lyric Opera of Chicago

SELECTED CDS/DVDS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION

Leontyne Price is a featured singer on all selections.

Puccini: *Tosca* (Decca) with Di Stefano; conducted by Karajan

Verdi: Aida (RCA) with Bumbry, Domingo, Milnes; conducted by Leinsdorf

Puccini: Madama Butterfly (RCA) with Elias, Tucker; conducted by Leinsdorf

Verdi: *Requiem* (Decca) with Elias, Bjoerling, Tozzi; conducted by Reiner

Leontyne Price Sings Barber (RCA) Hermit Songs with Barber at the piano, Knoxville: Summer of 1915, among others; conducted by Schippers

Right as the Rain (RCA) with Previn as conductor and pianist; popular classic songs by Arlen, Rodgers, Previn, among others

There are very few singers with voices that are as instantly recognizable, and revered, as the rich, creamy lyric soprano of Leontyne Price. She continues to be a powerful advocate not only for the art she loves, but for human rights.

Born in Laurel, Mississippi, in 1927, Price played the piano early on and soon began to sing at church and school. When she was nine years old, she heard Marian Anderson in concert; that, Price has said, "was what you might call the original kickoff" for her pursuit of what became an astonishing vocal career. Although her 1961 debut as Leonora in Verdi's *Il Trovatore* at the Metropolitan Opera instantly made her a legend—and landed her on the cover of *Time* magazine—she was already well known to opera audiences in cities such as San Francisco and Vienna (where, at the invitation of Herbert von Karajan, she made her debut as Aida in 1959).

Price has made a long career in opera, concert, and recital. Though she is best known as a Verdi and Puccini singer, she has always embraced the work of American composers, particularly Samuel Barber. She gave the premiere of his *Hermit Songs* at New York City's Town Hall in 1954, with the composer at the piano, and Barber went on to write many pieces for her.

In 1997, Price introduced children to one of opera's greatest heroines in her book *Aida*. Her scores of awards include the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1964), the Kennedy Center Honors (1980), the National Medal of the Arts (1985), the National Association of Black Broadcasters Award (2002), the French Order of Arts and Letters, the Italian Order of Merit, 19 Grammys, and three Emmys.

This award is visible evidence to the world of the esteem in which we as a nation hold opera. It was a long journey from my hometown of Laurel, Mississippi, to the capital of the greatest country in the world. I thank everyone who was involved in my selection and I share this recognition with everyone who helped me along the way. They have my sincerest thanks and appreciation. I am still almost speechless.

∞ Leontyne Price



Price in the title role of Aida. Photo courtesy of Lyric Opera of Chicago

1927

Born in Laurel, MS

Hears Marian Anderson in Jackson, MS

1955

Performs title role of Tosca for broadcast on a major television network, NBC

San Francisco Opera debut as Madame Lidoine in American premiere of Poulenc's Dialogues of the Carmelites

1958

Vienna Staatsoper debut in title role of Aida

Metropolitan Opera debut as Leonora in Il Trovatore

1966

At the opening of the new Met, sings world premiere of Barber's Antony and Cleopatra

1973

Sings at the funeral of former President Lyndon B. Johnson

1997

Publishes Aida, a book for children

2001

Makes a special appearance to sing at Carnegie Hall memorial concert for victims of 9/11

PPOMATTOX

FARMVILLE

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NEA Support of Opera

he National Endowment for the Arts is dedicated to supporting the advancement of the arts for all Americans. Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA is an independent agency of the federal government and is the nation's largest annual funder of the arts. The Arts Endowment's grants and programs assist in bringing both new and established art to people in all 50 states, including rural areas, cities, military installations, and media platforms. Since its inception, the NEA has awarded more than 135,000 grants totaling more than \$4 billion.

The NEA has a long history of support for opera. Beginning in 1967, only the second year of its grant-making activities, the NEA awarded a \$150,000 grant to the Metropolitan Opera National Company, a satellite of the Metropolitan Opera, which enabled the company to present performances for labor groups and students throughout the nation. Since then, the NEA has awarded more than 4,500 grants totaling nearly \$170 million to opera companies and other arts organizations in support of a wide variety of operatic activities. The catalytic effect of this support is reflected in the increased number of opera companies, from 46 companies in 1965 to more than 200 companies in 2010.

Key to the agency's history of opera support was the New American Works program, which from 1980 to 1995 awarded more than 600 grants totaling \$9.5 million to assist in the creation of new works. Among the operas made possible through this program are Anthony Davis' Amistad, John Adams' Nixon in China, William Bolcom's A View

from the Bridge, and Philip Glass' Appomattox. Through the support of the NEA, OPERA America launched the Opera Fund, which, in its first three years, awarded 50 grants totaling nearly \$1 million to provide for the creation and production of new works. The NEA continues to fund the creation of new works through its grant categories.

Through such programs as the Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center (Chicago), the Houston Grand Opera Studio, and the Merola Opera Program (San Francisco), the NEA has provided grants for the professional development of young emerging artists. Among the alumni of these programs are Dawn Upshaw, Nathan Gunn, and Denyce Graves.

The NEA has been a longstanding funder of television and radio broadcasts of opera, including such lauded programs as The Metropolitan Opera Presents (formerly Live from the Met), Great Performances, and NPR's World of Opera. In addition, the agency both develops and sustains large scale projects with significant national reach. In 2005, the NEA created the national leadership initiative Great American Voices, which within one season featured 24 professional opera companies in performances for our military families at 39 military installations across the country.

With the support of Congress and the President, the NEA Opera Honors was created in 2008, and it now stands as a milestone in the long line of NEA programs designed to foster the continuing growth of the opera art form in the United States.

The San Francisco Opera's 2007 world premiere of composer Philip Glass' Appomattox, libretto by Christopher Hampton, supported by an NEA grant. Photo by Terrence McCarthy

Making A Nomination

or the first time in 25 years Congress authorized a new award to recognize lifetime achievement and individual excellence: the National Endowment for the Arts Opera Honors (NEA Opera Honors). This award honors visionaries and luminaries who, by making extraordinary contributions to opera in the United States, have become cultural treasures of this great nation. It represents the highest recognition that our nation bestows in opera.

The NEA Opera Honors pay tribute to those visionary creators, extraordinary performers, and other interpreters who have made a lasting impact on our national cultural landscape, based either on a lifetime of artistic achievements or a single, uniquely valuable accomplishment. Nominees may include composers, librettists, singers, conductors, designers, and directors. In special circumstances, collaborative artistic teams may be nominated to acknowledge an exemplary American opera that has generated excitement, attracted audiences, and demonstrated potential for expanding the canon of the American opera repertoire. The NEA Opera Honors also will recognize individuals whose mastery has advanced the knowledge and/or appreciation of opera for the general public. Awards will be \$25,000 each and may be received once in a lifetime. A very limited number will be made.

HOW TO SUBMIT A NOMINATION

Recipients of the NEA Opera Honors are selected on the basis of nominations from the public. Nominations may be for individuals or for a group of individuals (e.g., a collaborative artistic team). Nominees must be citizens or permanent residents of the United States. Posthumous nominations will not be considered. Nominations must be submitted online at the Arts Endowment's website at http://www.nea.gov/honors/opera/nomination.html. An individual may submit one nomination per year. No one may nominate him/herself.

REVIEW OF NOMINATIONS

The selection criteria for the NEA Opera Honors are the artistic excellence and significance of a nominee's contributions to opera and the lasting impact on our national cultural landscape. Nominations are reviewed by an advisory panel of opera experts and at least one knowledgeable layperson. Panel recommendations are forwarded to the National Council on the Arts, which then makes recommendations to the chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. The chairman reviews the council's recommendations and makes the final decision on a limited number of award recipients. If not selected for an NEA Opera Honors award, nominees will be placed on the following year's nominations list and will remain there for up to four years. Please contact Georgianna Paul, Opera Specialist, 202/682-5600 or paulg@arts.gov with any questions.

For complete details about the NEA Opera Honors and the NEA Opera Honorees, visit http://www.nea.gov/honors/opera.

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For their role in imagining, creating, and implementing the NEA Opera Honors and for their contributions to this commemorative publication, we extend our thanks to these individuals:



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